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Washington, D. C.

ACROSS THE PACIFIC

By Katherine Hester Nettleship

Asiatic Department,
Museum of History, Science and Art
Los Angeles, California

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ACROSS THE PACIFIC,

A Handbook of

The Asiatic Symbol Exhibit

By Katherine Hester Nettleship

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Asiatic Department,
Museum of History, Science and Art
Los Angeles, California

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The Asiatic Symbol Exhibit

Overheard in the Asiatic Room

Visitor A—Gazing curiously at the Japanese suit of armor on a lay figure—"Some sort of Japanese or Chinese idol; you'd never think they would worship a thing like that!"

Visitor B—"Whole lot of junk here, seems to me!"

Visitor C—"H'm" (snorts scornfully) "Japanese! What's in the next room?"

Visitor D—"Hello!" (sees the case of crosses) "Roman Catholic!" (walks on) "What's this—a mummified man?" (Casually examining the suit of armor, reads label "*Do not touch.*") "H'm; shouldn't think any one would want to—scarey old thing; come along!" (Passes into next room.)

Visitor E—"Ah- This is what I wanted you to see. Isn't it wonderful! I spent two whole hours here yesterday and read every label. I never understood these things before. People don't half understand!"

These few remarks chosen at random are but typical of those uttered day after day as the constant stream of visitors pours through the little Asiatic Room.

The Asiatic Room as a Long-distance Telephone Booth

As "the old woman who lived in a shoe" found her quarters far too limited for the accommodation of her fast-growing brood, so that buxom dame, the Los Angeles County Museum, found her rapidly increasing progeny elbowing each other and clamoring for more room ere her housekeeping days had well begun. She did the best she could and bestowed upon the bouncing "Asia" a little room for herself where by installing a good, metaphorical, telephone service she might at least make her voice heard and keep herself from being forgotten till roomier days should come.

Lest We Forget

These are some of the facts about herself that "Asia" has continually to remind us of.

Population

If we count the peoples of both the Americas, the teeming myriads of Africa, the millions of Europe, and the endless multitudes of Australia, Polynesia and the islands of the seas—Asia equals them all, for hers is more than half the population of the globe.

If we omit the millions of China, Japan, Persia, Turkey, and other thickly populated parts of Asia, and take the peoples of India only, for each American there are three Hindus!

For Land Area

If we fit the two Americas upon Asia, one-seventh of Asia will still be left uncovered.

Religion

Asia is the birthplace of religions—Jewish, Christian, Buddhist and Mohammedan and of the yet older faiths in which they were nurtured.

Culture

Asia is the ancestral home of the Literature, Art and Science of the world.

THE VOICE OF ASIA

To catch some echoes then of the mighty voice of Asia, this little room has been set apart. Let those of the hurrying crowds who can pause for an hour or so, take up the "receiver" of her telephone and with ears intent listen to the echoes of her old-world story.

Turning away from the weariness, the controversies, the insincerities, the pretentiousness of things that fret in this day and age, real refreshment will be found in the subtle consciousness of a mysterious sympathetic re-union with long-lost brothers of the human race, for "the harp at Nature's advent strung has never ceased to play, the song the stars of morning sung has never died away."

THE CENTER CASE

A Question

"What shall we put in the center case?" is always the first question of the committee when changing the Asiatic exhibits, and for the Asiatic

Symbol exhibit the question had to be repeated and re-repeated as the symbols of Turkey, Arabia, Persia, India, Thibet, China and all the other countries of symbol-voiced Asia clamored for the pre-eminence. Presently through the many-toned din, right down in the heart of things, the true keynote sounded and the question of the center case was decided.

THE SYMBOL OF THE CROSS

That which was the Alpha of the human symbol-syllabary is that which will be its Omega when the story of the eons has spelled out.

Ever pointing East, West, North and South with all-identifying arms, from every quarter of the earth pours testimony that, in varied forms, this is the one symbol that has been held by all its peoples from remotest ages as being sacredly their own.

The Answer

The symbol of the Cross, then, as being the one and only world-wide inter-racial symbol, was the symbol that should hold the center case: so the Cross it is.

The Cross, an Asiatic Symbol

That a case of crosses in the center of the Asiatic room should at first sight appear to so many visitors as an incongruous arrangement is in itself a proof that we of the Anglo-Saxon race have need to be reminded from time to time of its Old-World birthplace and home.

In the following brief summary the "Suastika" as "mother of crosses" is given the pre-eminence.

The Suastika

In ancient Sanskrit *su* = well, *asti* = it is, *ka* = sign of the noun.

The Suastika is the oldest and most universal form of cross and dates back to the later Stone age. It probably originated in the effort of primitive man to fix the points of the four directions and the sequent religious instinct which bade him endeavor to propitiate the Mighty Mysteries hidden at the back of the Great Beyond, therefore he offered obeisance and oblation toward each possible source of their origin with an ordered regularity.

As a religious symbol, amulet or charm, the Suastika has held its own from remotest ages. Aeons ago it was scratched by primitive man on the gnawed bone of his prey to ensure divine aid in running down the next meal, and in this twentieth century it still takes form as the hatpin, brooch or watch fob that will bring good luck to its wearer. The same Suastika cross that was the one and only symbol during the Bronze and Iron ages, today, is in demand in the printer's office to form a simple border for newspaper or magazine cut. Used by the Chaldeans, Hittites and other races anterior to the Aryans, and carried by the Aryans to the lands of their dispersion, the Suastika today in many a remote lamisary in Thibet is being revolved on a pivot as an invocation or aversion to spirits, good or evil, according as it "kicks" to the right hand or to the left.

Carved on rocks in India and on ancient spindle whorls, used by the Brahmans before Buddhism developed and by the Chinese at least ten centuries before the Christian era, the Suastika today is, in both hemispheres, a popular art design busily embroidered in needlework by dainty woman fingers—yellow, white and brown. Traced by the Buddhist on the brow of the novice, 600 B.C., it is still equally sacred to the Hindu mother who outlines it in cereals about her tiny infant in lieu of other baptismal rite. Known amongst the Bantu negroes, the Australian aborigines, the Arizona Indians, the Toltecs and Aztecs, the ancient Scandinavians and the inhabitants of Palestine, Greece and Sicily, this age-long token of the world's simple faith and hope still persists as a universal invocation and as a symbol of divine beneficence.

Until the third century this "mother of crosses" was used in common with later varied forms as the sign of the Christian faith and was traced on many a Christian tomb in the catacombs of Rome.

A few interesting examples of its use on banner and silk-winder will be found at the southeast end of the center case.

The Crux Ansata

This was the cross of ancient Egypt—the cross of Osiris the "Universal Lord." Carved in temple walls, sketched on papyrus, portrayed on

mummy cerement and tomb, the people of Egypt 4000 years before Christ testified to their simple faith in this cross, the cross by which they believed Osiris, their great god, "gave life eternal to the spirits of the just."

A small specimen in enamel will be found in the north-east end of the center case.

The Tau Cross

This is the oldest known sacred alphabetical character and was possibly Babylonian in origin. It was the Thau of the Hebrews, the Tau of the Greeks, and the T of the Roman alphabet. It has always stood for safety and happiness and to the Egyptians it was also the emblem of hidden wisdom. Amongst the Babylonians it was the emblem of their mightiest god. It was undoubtedly the symbol which was made by the Hebrews with the blood of the slain lamb on the lintel of their dwellings on that long ago eve of Egyptian exodus.

The Runic Crosses—Celtic, Manx, Ionic or Irish

These are slightly differing forms of an ancient cross the origins of which have been lost in the mists of antiquity. By some antiquarians they are traced to the Egyptian circle of eternity, as at a very early period communications between Egypt and Ireland were certainly established. As a combination of sacred symbols, the circle of eternity being placed on the Suastika, the ends were obscured, and thus not only the Manx cross but also, ultimately, the simple Greek cross of later date originated.

Others attribute them to the Bolan or holed stones of Ireland which were worshiped as sacred symbols in prehistoric times, and even to this present day are in some districts of Ireland and South England regarded as potent to heal certain diseases. (Within the memory of those now living a sacred Bolan stone on the west coast of Ireland was nightly covered up tenderly with warm blankets.)

An excellent illustration of the Runic cross will be found on the south side of the case.

The Cross A. D.

The cross was finally adopted and publicly used as a symbol of the Christian faith in the third century A. D. Since then, in ever varied form, it

has proclaimed its symbol story to the world at large.

The Sign of the Cross

Baptized in rivers of water and seas of blood, at birth and in death, in victory and in defeat, by sinner and saint, monarch and mendicant, the cross for well nigh twenty centuries in the Christian world has been the one outward and visible sign of that hidden mystic union by which man is linked to his Maker.

The Cross Militant

While it stands for peace between man and his Maker, it has stood for bitter dissension between man and his fellow, and through dissension in the second century the Christian church was rent in twain. Thus down the ages has come to us a divided church the Eastern or Greek branch of which had its ancient capital at Constantinople and holds the Greek cross as its symbol, and the Western or Latin church whose metropolis was in Latium and which holds the Latin form of the cross as its symbol of faith.

Under a militant banner of the Cross as opposed to the Crescent, the forces of Christianity long faced their Islamic foes.

The Cross in Heraldry

Blazoned on the banners of medieval knights and interwoven with many ingenious diversities of detail in heraldic devices, crosses were individualized to their owners and distinguishing names bestowed upon them. Thus at the time of the Crusades when each true knight rode forth to do battle with the infidel, his banner, the rallying point of his followers, was easy to distinguish and describe.

Many devices were of Norman-French origin, hence the French names which cling to them still. Such are the *Lorraine cross, the cross fluerée, the cross avellane, cross pommée, cross moline, cross botonnée and cross fourchée.

Thus it is that some types of cross in the center

* The cross of Godfrey, duke of Lorraine, the Crusader conqueror, who, riding into Jerusalem while the streets still ran with blood, refused to receive the crown of a king where his Lord had been given a crown of thorns.

case can only be distinguished in terms of heraldry.

Ecclesiastical Crosses

Amongst the well recognized crosses of the Christian church the Greek and Latin crosses, representing the Eastern and Western branches, hold first place. The Patriarchal or "Cardinal's Cross" with double traverse and the Papal or "Pope's Cross" with triple traverse, typify to the initiated the offices exercised by pope and cardinal. The Agnus Dei, a cross surmounted by a blunt spear, is the cross of victory. The cross patonnée is the altar cross; the cross potent, the pectoral cross.

The cross crosslet fitchée with its sharpened, stakelike ends (illustrated in the arms of the See of Canterbury) was for use on the battlefield, being thrust in the ground before the eyes of the dying soldier for his hope and consolation.

St. Anthony, tradition says, was lame, therefore the crutch-like tau cross is associated with him.

St. Andrew is represented by an X shaped cross to commemorate a tradition concerning his crucifixion.

In the center case an interesting Russian Patriarchal cross and a plaque bearing the arms of the See of Canterbury are deserving of close examination.

Crosses, of What Made

The animal, mineral and vegetable kingdoms are all laid under tribute and the cross symbol is fashioned out of every material that the ingenuity of man can manipulate or his credulity render desirable, for no substance is accounted too rich and none too poor. Elephant tusk or tropical beetle, priceless gem or nail of the true cross, palm wood from Palestine or shivering aspen imbued with Calvary's woe, everything that is esteemed precious by virtue of intrinsic worth, legendary attribute and historical or sentimental association, is submitted for perpetuation in the all-sovereign form and acquires new value and interest thereby.

In the center case a cross of rich jewels, a yellow topaz cross, a cross of gold set with Brazilian beetles, a cross of mother of pearl overlay and a beautiful Florentine marble cross call for special attention.

SUMMARY

Though the collection of crosses in the center case is necessarily incomplete yet they are thoroughly representative and will well repay an hour spent in quiet thought. With the view of interesting younger students the labels have been written with unusual attention to detail and no trouble has been spared in verifying facts.

CASE 7

What is the Story?

The deep, pure color of this Chinese embroidered panel attracts the eye and the marvel of its intricate stitches ensnares the mind, but it is the deciphering of its fascinating symbol story that enchains the heart.

For those who would fain seek the aid of a "key" the interpretation of the panel together with its interesting bit of personal history has been committed in full to the label at its side. This woman's message to a woman is an excellent illustration of the poetry of art as embodied in symbol by the ancient peoples of the Far East.

CASE 8

A Chinese Robe

An Ancient Imperial Mandate

Preliminary to the study of this Chinese robe it is interesting to recall that in the Chinese classics is handed down an edict issued by the Emperor Shun (2000 B.C.) concerning the emblematic designs to be used on official robes. After enumerating the twelve symbolic figures of the ancients and specifying their positions on the robe with meticulous care, this forty century old mandate closes with the dignified words, "*I should wish to see these all displayed with the 'Five Colors' so as to form the official robes; it is yours to adjust them clearly.*"

Did They Avail?

If all the Buddhist and Taoist "emblems of the ancients" woven into this rarely beautiful robe were potent to fend for His Highness, the Mandarin, its original owner, his "health, wealth and happiness" were certainly secure, both in this world and the next.

From its conventional "ocean shore-line" border at the bottom to the fierce "dragons" on shoulder and back, those gold brocade emblems are designed to make a mystic invisible armor through which naught evil or inharmonious can penetrate. Domestic concord and harmonious environment are secured by "twin fish" and "lu" or "musical stones." Long life comes with the "undying cranes" and also with "ideographs of longevity," while happiness is brought with the "sacred fungus" from the Chinese Olympian mount of the gods; the "palm leaf fan" will ward off evil influences and the "wheel of perfect law" ensures an ordered existence which, like the "knot of destiny" has neither beginning nor end.

Rich in texture, perfect in workmanship and romantic in design, the queer old coat of this unknown grandee of far-away China is apt to arouse both sentiment, imagination, and keen æsthetic appreciation.

CASE 9

Mystic Symbols

Inherent Form Contrasts

A general survey of this little case of mystic symbols shows that they fall naturally into two classes, the geometrical and the curvilinear; the former without exception belong to the western orient and the latter to the east. We recognize this line characteristic as inherent when we call to mind the sacred cubes of the Druids, the cabalistic signs of the Chaldeans and Hittites, and the lotus of ancient Egypt, and then contrast them with the lotus of ancient Buddha lands and such age-old Chinese symbols as are illustrated in this case.

The "Signet of David"

Prominent amongst the rich tracery on the handsome Damascus brass vase is the "Sacred Three-corners" which, interwoven and duplicate, forms the star-like "Signet of David." This symbol has grown so familiar as to be without meaning to the ordinary art connoisseur, yet to the brain that thought it and to the hand that wrought it its religious import would have been far precedent to its art value. Together with the "Sacred Four" and the "Holy Five" corners this

mystic symbol was assimilated by the Mohammedans from native Saracenic races, given the name of a Hebrew king and regarded as their own. Handed down from remote ages, a part of the occult lore of Egyptian, Chaldean, Accadian and Hittite peoples, these symbols still form the foundations of many of the exorcisms and mystic rites practiced by their descendants, the wandering Gipsy tribes of Europe and Asia Minor. To the full-blooded Gipsy today the "Sacred Three-corners," whether traced with the blood of a white dove as an exorcism or worn on the person as an amulet, is of potency irresistible.

The "Seal of Solomon"

In the "Seal of Solomon" or the "Holy Four-corners" the sacred triangle re-appears in quadrupular combination. According to the wisdom of the ancients, never, either in conception or in construction, must this magic square take form other than as being the Sacred Triangle four times multiplied, thus, fusing the corners in a mystic union, the perfect number twelve is represented.

The "Omnipotent Five-Corners"

This sacred symbol is much used as a charm in districts south and east of the Black Sea, and is also a frequent figure in Byzantine art.

Though as a talisman its virtues seem to vary in different localities, yet to the genuine Romany as a preliminary to certain incantations its qualities never vary and it is infallible. His ancient formula decrees that at a certain hour of the moon it shall be traced upon the sand in the open air, the finger being dipped in holy "Three Kings" water. Each line shall be thirteen feet in length and, the figure being complete, the sorcerer shall prostrate himself therein and shall thirteen times repeat the incantation, and lo—it shall be even so!

The "Yang and the Yin"

Long ages ago in the far-off land of Sinim the heavens opened to one old mystic seeker after truth and, beholding as in a vision a great object lesson of the Universe as given by the Creator, he sought to materialize it in allegory and the "Yang and Yin" symbol evolved. In it we see Duality in Unity and Unity in Duality, Interdependency and Independency welded together—Two

in One. As a perfect picture of correlation it is unequalled and the philosopher ponders it long.

The Mitsu-tomoye

This symbol was adopted by Japan from China and undoubtedly had its origin in the same philosophy from which the "Yang and Yin" symbol arose. As soon as the great triune verities were realized, the need of a further form allegory was felt and out of that need was born this beautiful Trinity symbol, the most perfect that the mind of man has ever conceived.

Though primarily a philosophical emblem its possibilities have not been overlooked by the superstitious in Japan, who, regarding it as a talisman against the three evils of "flood," "fire" and "thieves," display it moulded in the gable-end roof tiles of residence and storehouse.

The Pakwa

In the Chinese interpretation of the Pakwa we find a marvelous combination of science, philosophy and occult credulity. Whole volumes have been written by Chinese and Occidentals to expound its mysteries, but the last word has still to be said.

Primarily the Pakwa symbol represents the two mighty elementals of nature, male and female, enshrined in the heart of the universe, the octagon of lines surrounding the center figure, the "Eight Directions," north, north-east, east, etc. The doctrine of the primal truth is carried throughout the lines, the unbroken ones symbolizing male, the broken ones female. The lines counted diagonally across from east to west or north to south, must, together with the center unit, make up the sacred number ten.

Frequently in art the design appears with its eastern side encircled by a dragon and its western with a phoenix, it being their sacred duty to guard the "Four Directions" from remotest north to farthest south.

While based on the great primal fact of the male and female in creation, yet interpretive readings of the Pakwa range together with them all the might and mystery of the universe, on the male side being heaven, light, strength, etc., and on the female earth, darkness, powerlessness and so on, all down the line.

Young China today, if questioned by Westerners

on the meaning of the Pakwa, will carelessly pronounce it a mere meaningless art figure and scornfully disclaim any knowledge of geomancy or occultism in connection with it, yet it is an interesting fact that all the native 1914 calendars in the principal Los Angeles China-town store were impressed with the Pakwa design in fullest detail.

The Korean Flag

To the casual observer the design of the late national flag of Korea was but a simple central figure with a few somewhat ineffective lines at its four corners, but to the student of Pakwa lore it was a meaningful design, more subtle in its mystic symbolism than any other flag in the world, not even excepting the Chinese.

The passing of the Korean flag is a cause of great regret to the archaeologist.

Where is the Symbol?

While the gentle grace and dignity of the little group is enchainning the attention of the lover of plastic art, the lover of the mystic in art is searching for the hidden symbol which, if un-initiate, he will almost certainly assign to the box so carefully carried by the boy.

The box, however, contains but the material gift which is being carried to the elect; the real "heart" of the gift, and that which will render it supremely acceptable in the eyes of its oriental recipient, is the fungus-like "joo-i" wand borne by the venerable sage. This time-honored emblem of the "food of the gods" possesses occult benedictory powers of untold value; not only does it ward off all hidden evil but, being the "as-you-wish-it" wand, it also insures the attainment of every noble aspiration.

The recognition of this oft-repeated symbol in the bronzes, porcelains and embroideries of China is a constant source of delight to the western student of eastern art.

The Scarlet Token

As, in a far-away time in a far-away city of Canaan, the display of a scarlet line saved its owner from her enemies, so at the present time in the simple beliefs of the hairy aboriginals of northern Japan a scarlet line displayed on the person will preserve them from the destroying enemies, sickness, disease and death. This sym-

bol appears as a strip of scarlet rag bound across the brow for headache, tied around the neck for throat trouble, or stuffed through a hole in the lobe of an ear as a general protective for personal areas indefinable or unwieldy.

How the scarlet talisman first claimed the faith of this ancient people has yet to be discovered, but so far neither the up-to-date civilization offered by Japan nor the spiritual enlightenment brought by the missionaries has shaken the credulity of these natives of storm-bound Yezo in this symbolic medium of corporeal salvation.

A Voice from Egypt

The little steatite amulet on the upper shelf should not be overlooked. Two holes at the back of this tiny emblem of "the All-seeing Eye" show it to have been worn on the person of the Egyptian in whose tomb it was buried some thousands of years ago; thus it would seem that, though methods vary, yet "the practice of the presence of God" has been one in intention all down the ages.

CASE 10

The Rishi

The "rishi" or "sennin" of Chinese lore was one who had so promoted the free action of the subliminal ego that he could at will project himself from his body, or set free a phantom horse or dragon from his gourd and on it ride off to far astral spaces to visit his friends, the Immortals.

Rishi Lee-tee-kwa

A Chinese legend tells of the Rishi Lee-tee-kwa, who once so unduly prolonged his heavenly visitations that his earthly return came too late to forestall a disposal (compulsory) of his body by the friend in whose charge it had lain. It so chanced that, as he arrived, a beggar passed away at the gate and thus supplied him with a substitute body in which to re-incarnate.

In Chinese art Lee-tee-kwa is always distinguished by his barbaric beggar-body and in this group he is thus shown expounding the Taoist scriptures to a court noble of high degree.

The Magic Gourd

On the handsome Chinese vase on the upper shelf a rishi has just liberated a soaring dragon, apparently for exercise since he is making no attempt to mount it.

The Rishis of India

According to the Rig-Veda the rishis of India dwell as "Divine Watchers" in the seven unsetting stars of the constellation Ursa Minor.

CASES 11, 12, 13

A World of Poetry

Shut within these three cases is a concrete illustration of the world of poetry which surrounds the home life of the Japanese.

Indoors and out the keen aesthetic sense of these Nature-folk seems to be ever on the alert and they dwell in a delicate thought world where each beautiful line and color woos for itself a bride and begets as its offspring a poem. Each flower and each combined design here illustrated has been the subject of hundreds of such poems thus begotten of Beauty wedded to Soul.

A Popular Art-language

For many centuries in Japan certain flowers and floral combinations have been associated with certain thoughts and these thoughts have become so fixed in the mind of the nation that artists have at their command a vivid art-language that is known and read of all men.

Poetic Inspiration in the Lavatory

The taste of the western house-wife who has selected her dainty toweling for virtues of fine texture is rarely recognized by her husband and children, whereas a little Japanese house-mother who provides a supply of poetic inspirations for use in the lavatory is assured of the instant appreciation of her husband and family.

A "Lonely" Cry

High up above the maple-bough in Case 13 swings a veritable poem in bronze—a cuckoo flying across the waning moon. To the lonely Japanese whose heart is hungering for his home the weird call of the cuckoo is saying, "Come-back! Come-back! Come-back!"; and so to the sensitive absentee the "Cuckoo and Moon symbol" ever adds an exquisite throe to quicken his sufferings.

CASE 14

What Does "Fuji" Mean to You?

The occidental lover of Japanese art, familiar-

ized with the outlines of Fujiyama in velvet, ivory, bronze and porcelain, is apt to relegate it to the realms of conventional decorative design and overlook the fact that, as a mountain, it still exists as a rarely exquisite reality.

Provable Facts of Fujiyama

It is a sleeping volcano towering 12,365 feet to the sky.

It is visible from one hundred miles out at sea.

It is a landmark from thirteen provinces.

Its last eruption started December, 1707, and continued five weeks.

Traditional "Facts" of Fujiyama

It arose in a single night simultaneously with the formation of Lake Biwa, one hundred and fifty miles away.

Amidst most awful convulsions and terrifying earth-throes it sprang into being in the year 301 B. C.

Its smoke was a constant feature in the landscape as late as the 14th century.

What Does Fujiyama Mean in Japan?

Something more than beautiful landscape, something beyond a mere pyramid of graceful curves, something greater than twelve thousand feet of skyward lifted earth, is matchless Fujiyama in the land which gave it birth.

Inspirational Symbolism

Standing in silent majesty with its snow-capped summit so far removed from earth, so near to heaven, small wonder is it that to this poet-nation Fujiyama symbolizes unshakeable Faith, unwavering Hope, eternal Peace, stainless Purity—Heaven—God. "The tent of white Peace, the dome of everlasting prayer." (Yone Noguchi.)

Aventurine Lacquer

To the connoisseur in lacquer the little "aventurine" Mt. Fuji plaque on the lower shelf will give peculiar pleasure.

CASE 15

Horns

The Changeless East

Throughout Asia from earliest ages "horns"

have been recognized as a symbol of power. Fully thirty centuries ago in the "farthest west" of Syria the Sweet Psalmist of Israel in thankfulness for victory over foes and uplift from sheepfold to throne sang, "mine horn hast Thou exalted"; less than a century ago the pair of water-buffalo horns at the bottom of this case were adorning the helmet of some bold warrior in the "farthest east" of Old Japan.

A Well-recognized Symbol

That horns were a generally recognized and popular symbol of power in Japan for many centuries is attested by the evidence of helmets dating back to the time of Yoshitsune, 1192 A. D. Their use in the eighteenth century is interestingly illustrated in the little postal card reproductions of well known paintings of that period.

A Demon-mask

In the clever wood-sculpture of the "Demon Mask" the diabolical lineaments are greatly enhanced by the well-placed pair of antlers as a dominant assertion of power.

Horns in Hades

The porcelain painter also has zealously apportioned to each demon the traditional emblem of power, and, judging by the terrified aspect of the kneeling watchers, they are sufficiently impressive. The victims under torture, too, are unresistant before their horned tormentor. (In Buddhist sacred art the triangle, as shown on the brows of the watchers, indicates a soul newly arrived in Hades. Regarding the triangle of white paper bound on the brow of the dead in Japan, students of Egyptology and Mexicology have many interesting suggestions to offer.)

CASES 16 and 18

The Seven Happy Genii of the Far East

The Multiplication of Santa Clauses

The West apportions one Santa Clause to provide for the needs of its children but when the children grow up they find themselves orphaned so far as benevolent genii are concerned. The East has apportioned one Santa Clause for its children but it provides in addition six other Santa Clauses, so that at no period of their lives shall they find themselves orphaned and uncared for.

The Happy Quartet

In this case only the most popular four of these seven "gods of Felicity" are represented, but for the benefit of students the whole seven are here listed.

Toshi-toku

The Chinese Shaou-rao, the god of Longevity, to whom old folk, and those who desire to become old, may turn.

Daikoku and Ebisu

The gods of Cereals and Fish, who will lighten the cares of all family providers.

Hotei

The children's Santa Claus.

Jiu-rojin

The god of Wisdom and Benevolence, the patron saint of students and teachers and of all learned professions.

Bishamon

The god of War who hears the petitions of soldiers.

Benten

The goddess who tenderly cares for all women-kind.

The Limited Functions of the Happy Genii

The Seven Happy Genii have no connection with a future existence, their sole duty being to provide for the natural desires and creature comforts of their own particular beneficiaries.

The Happy Genii Always True to Type

Though in minor details these seven gods of Felicity may, according to the gay humor of the artist, vary slightly in representation, yet they are always true to type and the student who learns to distinguish Daikoku by his square cap, big boots and rice bag, Ebisu by his pointed cap, fishing rod and carp, and Hotei by his full or empty bag of toys, etc., lays up for himself an endless source of pleasure in Chinese and Japanese art.

Identifying "Earmarks"

The Seven Happy Genii always "wear" big ears.

The Treasure Ship

This "Treasure-ship of the East" surely embodies that old axiom of the West, "When my ship comes home." The vessel belongs to the "Happy Seven" and at the dawn of each new year everybodys hopes for them to come sailing in with it. It is laden with every conceivable emblem of "health, wealth and happiness," not the least desirable amongst them all being the "Bridge of Harmony," the "Rolls of Wisdom" and the "Inexhaustible Purse."

CASE 17

The Bronze Buddha of Kamakura

Buddha—Enlightenment

The figure of "Buddha" is the representation of a *condition*, not of a *person*.

The Test of an Artist

Just so far as an artist can convey in this symbol of "enlightenment" the impression of an ineffable peace, still rapture, utter selflessness, the intense inwardness of the soul absorbed in the contemplation of divine beatitudes, other-worldliness, enlightenment, just so far has he succeeded in his aim.

The Kamakura "Buddha"

To Occidental and Oriental alike, a quiet study of the great "Buddha" of Kamakura infallibly results in the personal recognition that in it he sees one of the world's great masterpieces.

CASE 75

Lotus

A Changeless Symbol

Thousands of years ago in the temples of ancient Egypt the lotus emblem of the goddess Isis lifted men's thoughts from earth to heaven, and today, in mystic Asia, the lotus-symbol message still rings sweet and true and clear.

This is the Interpretation

Tho' rooted in *mud*, *unsullied*, thy blossom

Imbrues with *sweet perfume* the *neighboring air*
Suns of the Morning impregnate thy *bosom*

While *straight*, *branchless stem* rears thy *chalice-cup* fair.

(Impurity, spotlessness, sanctity; local environment, heavenly wisdom, soul-life; single-minded directness, life's highest purposes.)

In Asiatic Art

Whether as the throne of a "Buddha" in Thibet, the footstool of an incarnate "Deity" in India, the meaningful design on a palace panel in Pekin or a metal triumph in realism on some richly furnished altar in Japan, the sacred symbolism of the lotus is the most widely understood and reverently cherished of all Asia's rich art code today.

CASE 19

Smybol Origin

The Chinese philosopher, ever a close observer of Nature, reveals her secrets to the poet and the painter, and while the poet weaves them into song the painter tells the story with his brush. Thus it came about that some two thousand years ago the people of Cathay crystalized into a moral for the married the story of the matings of Mandarin ducks; and this is the story.

Faithful Unto Death

The Mandarin drake and duck mate for life. They companion each with the other only, seeking no outside company.

Winter's snows and bitter blasts diminish naught of their fidelity to each other.

When one dies, the other, uttering a low plaintive cry, roams the accustomed haunts seeking its lost mate until, of sheer grief and loneliness, it also ceases to live.

This is why, in China and Japan, "Mandarin ducks" are symbols of "Conjugal Felicity."

CASE 20

A Chinese Festival Cloth

The Atmosphere of Joy

That the Chinese attribute no small importance to the influence of environment is testified by the value attached to all symbols of happy augury in home and social life.

By virtue of its design, this beautifully embroidered silken square should exhale a perfect aura of joy and favorably affect the well-being of all who come within its radius, since ideographs for "happiness" and other equally popular symbols of "joy" are duplicated to the utmost limit of its space from center to border. To signify the nature of the happiness desired, the "pearl of immortality" has been placed at the top and the whole committed to the sacred care of the Dragon and Feng-hwang (phoenix).

CASE 27

The Rose of Armenia. Peacock

Legend

In the first century A. D. Princess Santookhd became a convert to the teaching of the Apostle Thaddeus whom Jesus, after his resurrection, had directed to go to Armenia. The Princess (together with the Apostle Thaddeus) was put to death on the beautiful plains of Shavarshan and from her blood roses and lillies have ever bloomed. The Peacock is the emblem of a royal apotheosis.

Where the "Four Rivers" Meet

The manufacture of a certain historical fig-leaf garment is apt to be regarded as Eden's only representative piece of needlework. Geographically, if not historically, this exquisite gold and silver embroidery also came from there.

"Where the Pison, the Gihon, the Hiddekel and the Euphrates had their source, there was the garden of Eden" (Gen. 2:10-14), and in that wonderful land where the "Four Rivers" meet, the land of Eden and Ararat, the tender fingers of a gentle Armenian lady wrought out this rich design.

CASE 21

Rosaries—Doves—Jade

Rosaries Are of Ancient Origin

Long ago in India rosaries were used to number the prayers being uttered by the devotee. Many centuries later the use of the rosary was adopted by the Christian ascetic, and yet centuries later Islamic worshipers identified the rosary with their own ritual.

Classification of Rosaries

Rosaries, though made of an unending variety of beads, can generally be classified as Christian, Buddhist or Moslem according to the number of beads on the string. For the Roman Catholic the "Ave Maria" rosary must consist of one hundred and fifty small beads with fifteen large ones for "paternosters," while the Hindu "Trinity" rosary is composed of one hundred and eight beads representing unity—duality—trinity, or one One, two Twos, three Threes thus multiplied— $1 \times 2 \times 2 \times 3 \times 3 \times 3$. The Mohammedan rosary is to assist in the enumeration of the ninety-nine beautiful names of Allah, with three "stop" beads to mark the exclamation of "Allah Akbar!", God is Great!

Hindu Sub-classification

In India further definitions can be made according to the kind of beads used, as those who ascribe to Siva the pre-eminent place in the Hindu Trinity wear rosaries of the rough Rudrakasha berries, while those who consider Vishnu supreme use smooth-beaded rosaries carved from the wood of the sacred Tulasi tree.

THE DOVE—A SYMBOL OF SPIRIT

A Soul As Derived from the Mother

The dove in every land, in every age, has been to men the symbol of soul-life and spiritual inspiration. During the Stellar Mythos of primordial man, according to Egyptian belief, 5000 B. C., the dove was used to represent a soul as derived from the mother. The ancient Egyptians believed that the soul on leaving the mummy underwent transformation in Amenta and became bird-headed, thus resembling the Holy Spirit. Though during the Stellar mythos the soul as derived from the mother was represented as a dove, in the later Lunar mythos it was believed that the soul was derived from the father and then was represented as a hawk.

As Effluent from a King

During the Christian era, in medieval France, at the cathedral coronation of a king, doves were liberated before him in token of the diffuse influence of divine Spirit which through him should spread abroad throughout the land.

In Mohammedan Lands

Every Mohammedan believes in the Messenger Dove that sat on the Prophet's shoulder pouring words of holy Inspiration into his ear, and to every Moslem today the doves on the Mosques and the Minarets still utter in sacred concert the truth of "*Koran-Kahu! Koran-Kahu! Koran-Kahu!*"

In Christian Lands

Whether as a Noachic collaborator after the great world deluge, or as a seal of Divine approval on the scene at Jordan's ford; whether borne as a sacred emblem at British coronation, or carried, instinct with meaning, on white Freemason wand, wherever the Cross is the standard, the Dove is the Holy Sign.

Characteristic Illustrations

In the Indian fan and the Damascus vessel of beaten brass we have two excellent illustrations of its use in eastern art.

JADE

A Precious Product

True jade is found principally in New Zealand, China, Siberia and Alaska and by virtue of its extreme toughness, hardness and polishability is highly esteemed in every land.

Revered by the Chinese

Jade is regarded by the Chinese as almost a sacred substance and its ten symbolisms form an honored national decalogue.

A Decalogue of Jade Symbolisms

Honesty is represented by the clear brilliancy of its polish.

Accuracy is represented by its close texture.

Justice is represented by its clear-cut angles.

Politeness is represented by its smooth-polished surfaces.

Sincerity is represented by its translucent revelation of all internal flaws.

Loyalty is represented by its unmuddled color. (Anglo-Saxon equivalent "true-blue.")

Unchangeableness is represented by its lustre that never dims.

Music is represented by its pure resonant tones under sharp vibration.

Earth is represented by its integral substance.

Virtue is represented by its aggregation of excellent qualities to which every one attaches high value.

The jade pendant in the case is of Chinese workmanship and its perfect polish illustrates the result of centuries of transmitted experience and skill.

The Cross was cut by a Western lapidary from a lump of jade that had long been the fetish of a savage African tribe. It displays in its workmanship evidence of the triumph maintained by its tough, dense substance over the attacks of tools which, though of guaranteed high temper, proved unequal to the test.

CASE 28

Some Symbols in Hindu Art Photographs

To the Initiate

To the graduate student of the history, literature, art and religion of India these photographs will be as the leaves of an open book with pages brightly illumined.

To the Un-initiate

To the one whose studies have yet to begin, lest the symbolism appear grotesque and the subject-matter unintelligible, the following tentative "key" is supplied with the hope that in fitting its "wards" much pleasure may fall to his share.

Covering Statement

Art in India is but the expression of Religion, and Symbolism is ever its handmaid.

The Symbol of "Multiple Arms"

The attribution of multiple arms does but symbolize to the Hindu the many avenues of power and mercy by which Deity can perform its will.

The Third Eye

The third eye in the center of Siva's brow symbolizes Divine vision—the all-seeing Eye of Spiritual Insight.

Symbolical Attributes

In Hindu art each of the deities possesses cer-

tain symbolical attributes for purposes of identification; such are the discus, trident, conch-shell, tiger, elephant, white bull, rat, etc.

Combinations of Man and Brute

Symbolical combinations in Egypt, Assyria and Greece produced the sphinx, the Griffin and the satyr, and a like apotheosis in India has produced the elephant-headed Ganesha, the "mascot" of every harassed, study-racked student.

The Hindu Trinity

The three deities of the Hindu Trinity are Brahma, Vishnu and Siva.

Vishnu the "Preserver"

Vishnu having been incarnated eight times as a "Preserver" and once as the "Enlightener" is expected by every Hindu to appear finally, in the near future, "without sin unto salvation."

Symbolical "Incarnations"

The traditional forms of Vishnu's earliest incarnations as "Fish," "Tortoise," "Boar," and "Man-lion" were evidently symbolical figures dimly reminiscent of remote primordial conditions, while the five later incarnations in human form are quasi-historical.

An "Ideal" of Indian Artists

Amongst these photographs may be found interesting studies of conformity to Hindu ideals of masculine physical perfection, i. e. broad shoulders, slender waist (like a lion), smooth limbs, long arms, deep navel, and large and long eyes.

CASES 30, 31

Four Supernatural Creatures

These two cases are devoted to various illustrations, in embroidery, bronze and sandal wood, of the "Four Supernatural Creatures" of the Far East.

The Stamp of Historic Approval

The fact that as three thousand years have passed in China the continuous use of these "Four Symbols" has not resulted in their relegation by

her craftsmen to the limbo of old fashioned and obsolete designs, speaks well for the steadfastness of the East as compared with the West.

Their Origin

In what strange dreams of saurian-haunted ancestors did the "Four Supernatural Creatures" originate, or, did such creatures actually roam the old earth in the dim and distant ages of the past? Who shall say!

Their Status in China

Whatever their origin, they maintain an unchallenged status as noble and all-powerful entities both in occult symbolism and in art.

The Dragon

Though the dragon as a supreme symbol of concrete living force belongs to the East and West* alike, to China has descended as the accumulation of ages a wealth of "Dragonology" that seems to have no limit.

Its Primitive Type

The primitive dragon, both in literature and art, seems to have been possessed of many forms, functions and "spheres of influence."

Colors

There were yellow dragons, white dragons, and dragons blue, red, violet, green and black. According to the early Chinese astronomers the Azure Dragon presided over the eastern quadrant of the Uranoscope and influenced the early morning hours. We are also told that "when the White Dragon breathed, its breath turned to gold, and when the Violet Dragon spat, its spittle became a ball of crystal."

The Chinese Jupiter Pluvius

In times of drought the dragon god of rain was invoked, pictures of him were made, his name written many times, and representations of him carried in procession.

Dragon Residences

In harmony with the four seasons they moved from the heavens to the clouds, the clouds to the

*Tennyson's "Idylls of the King, Lancelot and Elaine," stanza 420; Brewer's "Dictionary of Phrase and Fable"; "Pendragon."

earth, and from the earth to the "dragon castles at the bottom of the ocean."

A Royal Symbol

None but the emperor might use the symbol of the five-clawed dragon and the correct way to convey the news of an emperor's death was to announce that "His Majesty has mounted his Dragon."

The Modern Type

The modern dragon, as described by a Chinese author, has the—

Head of a camel

Horns of a stag

Eyes of a devil

Ears of a bull

Neck of a serpent

Belly of a frog

Scales of a fish

Paws of a tiger

Talons of an eagle

and the characteristic potentialities of all combined.

The Emblem of Omnipotence

In the paintings, embroideries or carvings of dragons a round ball is shown in the claw or near the head. (See embroidery in lower case.) This is variously called the "sun" or "pearl" and is interpreted to represent the "soul," "omnipotence," "immortality."

KYLIN OR UNICORN

A Mythological or Zoological Entity?

Who shall decide when learned archaeologists can not agree as to whether the unicorn once really existed as a species that now has become extinct, or whether it has only been yet another of those mythological marvels on which the questioning mind of man has ever been prone to dwell. Be this as it may, in the land of Sinim the Lin has ever been an animal greatly loved and revered.

The Kylin in Chinese Literature

The unicorn appears in literature under three names—Ky=male, lin=the female, Kylin=the species. Mention is made of the Lin in ancient "Odes" compiled by Confucius.

The Lin in Chinese Art

In Chinese Art the Lin is frequently represented in combination with an unusually large star. According to tradition the appearance of a Lin on earth is always coincident with the appearance of a strange bright star in the heavens and their simultaneous advent presages the birth of an inspired sage or noble ruler.

The Lin in Chinese History

Chinese history speaks of the simultaneous appearance of a Lin and a brilliant new star just before the birth of Confucius, 551 B. C., and again of their appearance five hundred and fifty years later. Learned Chinese of the present day who are willing to accept the Christian Scriptures as history consider the star to be identical with that "star of the East" which rested over Bethlehem.

In addition to the beautiful wood carvings of the Lin in Case 30 and the old bronze in Case 31 the Japanese octagonal plate on the bracket in the southeast corner of the room carries a "Lin" design (probably of Chinese inception) that is worthy of some attention.

THE PHOENIX OR FUNG-HWANG

Types Ancient and Modern

The ancient type of the "Flowery Fowl" suggests the pheasant as its prototype, while the more modern type introduces characteristics of the peacock. A Chinese author describes the Fung-hwang as having "the head of a pheasant, the beak of a swallow and the neck of a tortoise." In art it is always represented as a bird of rich plumage with a tail of long waving feathers.

Five Sybolic Colors

Each of its "five colors" is typical of one of the "five virtues," i. e. "Benevolence, Uprightness, Propriety, Knowledge, Reliability."

A Bird of Good Omen

It is a bird of good omen and its rare appearances presage extremely auspicious events. It is sometimes called the "Vermilion Bird" from its birthplace within the "Vermilion Cave."

A Royal Symbol

While the Dragon represented the Emperor of

China the Vermilion Bird was the symbol of the Empress.

TORTOISES

Two Forms

Though the tortoise has two forms each of which is considered lucky, yet the natural tortoise is regarded simply as a happy-natured creature who is the emblem of one thousand years of life.

The "Black Warrior"

The super-natural "Black Warrior," on the other hand, is of vastly greater importance than his true-to-nature brother for he is the president of the North quadrant of the Uranoscope and its corollaries, Winter and Night. By virtue of his long, heavy tail, the outgrowth of his own hoary antiquity, he has the symbolical power to bestow ten thousand years of life on such as may regard them as a boon.

Tortoise Shells in Divination

By means of a tortoise shell were the "Eight Trigrams" revealed to the sage Fu-shi; on the backs of tortoises have other messages from the gods been conveyed, and by the mystic intervention of tortoise shells in divination the will of the gods may yet be made known to men.

PICTURE TO THE RIGHT OF CASE 30

"Nightingale and Plum-Blossom"

A Japanese Idyl

The association of "nightingale with plum-blossom" is one of the happiest of all the beautiful nature parables that the Japanese have set themselves to interpret.

Its Symbol-name

"Sweetness and Harmony" is the name given to this picture-parable of Nature's first sign-manual to her pledges of summer joy.

Its "Thought-sketch"

Winter has reigned—the birds have long been silent—the dormant trees leafless and seemingly dead. Winter's reign is ending—Spring returns; a flood of melody from the love-thrilled nightingale proclaims it—a flush of sweet pearl-like blos-

som on the seemingly dead gray tree shows that life, glad Life—not Death—reigns there.

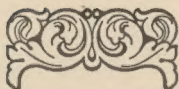
Its Setting

A breath of perfume, a low, tender warble of bird joy waft into an upper chamber in the palace. A Court lady, questioning their source, stepped softly out on to the balcony.

There—were the leafless top plum-withes that all winter long had fretted her balcony rail, but—whence came perfume and song? She pauses to look around. Suddenly her searching glance is arrested and scarcely daring to breathe, she motionless, stands enchanted. There—on her very own plum tree, sharp winter's bonds have been severed and low in its branching twiglets both blossoms and joy-bird appear!

The Artist

Herself the daughter of a shogun court lady or the Tokugawa days and now resident in Los Angeles, she has enshrined in her girlhood memories traditions of costume and customs that have passed into history. Her brush here portrays with attentive fidelity the flowing scarlet and white silken robes and green overdress and the long, glossy, un-ringletted black tresses that characterized full Court dress in the Tokugawa period of feudal Japan.



AFTERWORD

With "the nightingale and plum" our little journey round the Asiatic Symbol Exhibit has come to an end.

Most European books have their dedication at the beginning but it is permitted unto an Asiatic Catalogue to have it at the end.

Most European book-owners write their names on the first page—there is a line here for yours on the last. Therefore—

"With the hope that during this 'journey' some twigs that seemed dull and lifeless have blossomed into sweetness and song, this little catalogue is dedicated unto you

.....

of

by the Asiatic Art Committee."

KATHERINE HESTER NETTLESHIP,
Chairman.

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